

Judicial Partnership Program launched in Macedonia



February 11-15 the U.S. Embassy's OPDAT program launched an INL-funded Judge to Judge Partnership Program with the visit of Judge Beverly Reid O'Connell of the Los Angeles Superior Court and Judge Hollis Hill from the King County Superior Court in Washington State to Macedonia. The program aims to support implementation of the new Criminal Procedure Code by establishing a sound partnership between Macedonian and American judges.

On February 12, Ambassador Paul Wohlers opened a two-day conference on "The Role of the Judge in an Adversarial System," in partnership with the Academy for Judges and Prosecutors and the Macedonian Judges Association. This conference focused on the enforcement of law under the new Criminal Procedure Code, but also emphasized ethical and professional standards for judges, essential to fundamental rule of law principles.

On February 15 the U.S. Judges lectured at the law faculty on comparative criminal procedure, gave interviews to media, and spoke at the American Corner about the U.S. legal system and how they became judges.

As part of the program, the U.S. judges toured the Skopje Criminal Court and observed a few trials. The program continues with the visit of four additional U.S. judges to Macedonia in April.